

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 00014 031002Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-04

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 /044 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6852

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 0014

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SN

SUBJECT: CABINET LINE-UP --ONE CHANGE

REF: SINGAPORE 5548

1. DESPITE PRE-ELECTION RUMORS OF SEVERAL CHANGES, DECEMBER 30 ANNOUNCEMENT OF PM LEE'S NEW CABINET REVEALED ONLY THE DROPPING OF MINISTER FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY DR. LEE CHIAW MENG. HIS PORTFOLIO WAS GIVEN TO JEK YUEN THONG, MINISTER FOR CULTURE. CABINET WAS SWORN-IN BY PRESIDENT SHEARES ON DECEMBER 31.

2. FULL LINE-UP: DR. GOH KENG SWEE, DEPUTY PM AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE; DR. TOH CHIN CHYE, MINISTER FOR HEALTH; MR. S. RAJARTANAM, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS; MR. ONG PANG BOON, MINISTER FOR LABOR; MR. LIM KIM SAN, MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS; MR. JEK YUEN THONG, MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND SCIENCE; MR. JEK YUEN THONG, MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; ENCIK OTHMAN BIN WOK, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS; MR.E.W. BARKER, MINISTER FOR LAW AND THE ENVIRONMENT; MR. CHUA SIAN CHIN, MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION; AND MR. HON SUI SEN, MINISTER FOR FINANCE.

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3. DR. TOH, MR. RAJARATNAM, AND MR. ONG WERE DESIGNATED "SENIOR MINISTER".

4. COMMENT: LEE'S ANNOUNCEMENT WAS PRECEDED BY A SPATE OF RUMORS ALLEGING THAT A MAJOR CABINET RESHUFFLING WAS UNLIKELY, IN CONTRAST TO THE PREDICTIONS OF THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. ASSUMING THERE WAS SOME SUBSTANCE TO THESE EARLIER

PREDICTIONS, IT NOW APPEARS LIKELY THAT AFTER A YEAR OR SO, A FEW OF THE OLDER MINISTERS MAY RESIGN OR RETIRE, LEADING TO A RESHUFFLING OF THE CABINET AND THE INFUSION OF NEW BLOOD. THIS SCENARIO COULD NECESSITATE SOME BI-ELECTIONS. THE RATIONALE FOR THIS ROUND-ABOUT WAY FOR CHANGING PERSONNEL PROBABLY INVOLVES QUESTIONS OF FACE AND INTERNAL PAP POLITICS. UNLIKE MINISTERIAL FAILURES, WHO ARE DROPPED ABRUPTLY, THE RETIREMENT OF SUCCESSFUL MINISTERS INVOLVES A GREATER SENSE OF TACT, IF ONLY BECAUSE AN ABRUPT DISMISSAL IS A CLEAR SIGN OF AN ERROR OF COMMISSION OR OMISSION.

5. LEE CHIAW MENG'S DISMISSAL WAS PRESAGED BY HIS REMOVAL FROM THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PAP (REFTEL). AS IN THE PREVIOUS CABINET, TECHNOCRAT HON SUI SEN IS THE SOLE MINISTER NOT TO BE ON THE CEC.
GRANT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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SAS ID: 3672278
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TAGS: PINT, SN
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vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e1dae4dd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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